

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Peripheral unit management system for managing a plurality of peripheral units by a peripheral unit manager via a network wherein each of the plurality of peripheral units has a serial number and a unique ID number to distinguish it from other peripheral units and is connected to the network for communication between the manager and the peripheral units, comprising:

a unit for determining whether or not one of the peripheral units has been replaced by communicating with the respective peripheral units and reading respective serial numbers and ID numbers of the peripheral units, and

a unit for obtaining new data of a peripheral unit when the determining unit determines that the peripheral unit has been replaced, or reusing data being accumulated in another peripheral unit when the determining unit determines that the peripheral unit has not been replaced.

2. Peripheral unit management system according to claim 1, wherein each peripheral unit comprises a main body having a first recording medium that records a serial number and a board having a second recording medium that records an ID number, the board can be inserted to and removed from the body and performs a connecting function to the network thereby enabling it to transmit the serial number and the ID number over the network, and when the board is replaced, the management system reads the serial number and the ID number and determines whether or not the main body of the peripheral unit has been replaced or not.

3. Peripheral unit management system according to claim 1, wherein each peripheral unit comprises a main body not having a recording medium that records a serial number and a board having a first recording medium that records a serial number and a second recording medium that records an ID number, the board can be inserted to

09768360-012501

and removed from the body and performs a connecting function to the network thereby enabling it to transmit the serial number and the ID number over the network, and when the board is replaced, the management system reads the serial number after the serial number has been set by an operational panel either of its own or of the peripheral unit and reads the ID number of the peripheral unit, and determines whether or not the main body of the peripheral unit has been replaced.

4. Peripheral unit management method for managing a plurality of peripheral units by a peripheral unit manager via a network wherein each of the plurality of peripheral units has a serial number and a unique ID number to distinguish it from other peripheral units and is connected to the network for communication between the manager and the peripheral units, comprising the steps of:

communicating with the respective peripheral units and reading respective serial numbers and ID numbers of the peripheral units,

determining whether or not one of the peripheral units has been replaced based on the respective serial numbers and the ID numbers of the peripheral units,

obtaining new data of a peripheral unit when it is determined that the peripheral unit has been replaced in the determining step, and

reusing data having been accumulated in another peripheral unit when it is determined that the peripheral unit has not been replaced in the determining step.

5. Peripheral unit management method according to claim 4, wherein each peripheral unit comprises a main body having a first recording medium that records a serial number and a board having a second recording medium that records an ID number, the board can be inserted to and removed from the body and performs a

connecting function to the network thereby enabling it to transmit the serial number and the ID number over the network, and the method further comprising the steps of:

5 reading the serial number and the ID
number when the board is replaced, and
 determining whether or not the main body
of the peripheral unit has been replaced or not.

6. Peripheral unit management method according to
claim 4, wherein each peripheral unit comprises a main
10 body not having a recording medium that records a serial
number and a board having a first recording medium that
records a serial number and a second recording medium
that records an ID number, the board can be inserted to
and removed from the body and performs a connecting
15 function to the network thereby enabling it to transmit
the serial number and the ID number over the network, and
the method further comprising the steps of:

 reading the serial number and the ID
number of the peripheral unit, after the serial number
20 has been set by an operational panel either of its own or
of the peripheral unit when the board is replaced, and
 determining whether or not the main body
of the peripheral unit has been replaced.

7. Recording medium readable by a computer and
25 used for a peripheral unit management method for managing
a plurality of peripheral units by a peripheral unit
manager via a network wherein each of the plurality of
peripheral units has a serial number and a unique ID
number to distinguish it from other peripheral units and
30 is connected to the network for communication between the
manager and the peripheral units, said medium having a
program recorded thereon for making the computer execute
the steps of:

 communicating with the respective
35 peripheral units and reading respective serial numbers
and ID numbers of the peripheral units,
 determining whether or not one of the

0976360-01504

peripheral units has been replaced based on the respective serial numbers and the ID numbers of the peripheral units,

obtaining new data of a peripheral unit
5 when the determining unit determined that the peripheral
unit has been replaced, and

reusing data being accumulated in another peripheral unit when the determining unit determined that the peripheral unit has not been replaced.